AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS

The following is a listing of the claims and their status. Please amend the claims in this application as follows:

Claims 1-43 (Canceled)

44. (Currently Amended) An orthotic ~~plantar fascia~~ foot support device for ~~providing support to, and reducing stress on, the plantar fascia of~~ a human foot, comprising:

a ~~thin flexible stretch-resistant~~ foot support device having a thin flexible stretch-resistant sole member with a sole engaging surface sized and shaped to engage the outer skin tissue on at least a portion the sole of the foot and extend along at least a portion of the plantar fascia region of the ~~foot~~ sole, in the region of the foot extending from ~~about the ball of the foot to~~ the heel ~~of the foot~~ to the distal end of the toes, excluding the portion of the foot under the four small toes ~~for providing support to the plantar fascia region of the foot~~; and

an adhesive layer on said sole engaging surface for adhering said device directly to the outer skin tissue on the sole of the foot, and [[a]] at least one protective cover removeably disposed over said adhesive layer which, when removed, exposes said adhesive layer;

said stretch-resistant ~~device~~ sole member sufficiently stretch-resistant to restrict extension and stretching of the outer skin tissue on the sole of the foot, when adhered thereto, and

said adhesive layer of sufficient adhesive strength to maintain said stretch-resistant sole member in place on the outer skin tissue on the sole of the foot, such that tension forces applied to the plantar fascia ~~from forces on the arch of the foot which push the bones of the foot downwardly~~ are shared with said ~~device~~ outer skin tissue, said adhesive layer, said sole engaging surface, and said stretch-resistant sole member to restrict extension and stretching of the outer skin tissue of the sole of the foot and to restrict stretching of the plantar fascia, whereby preventing excessive tensile stress in the plantar fascia.

45. (Currently Amended) The device according to claim 44, wherein

said stretch-resistant ~~device~~ sole member has a ~~uniform~~ thickness of less than ~~about~~ 30 mils (0.762 mm).

46. (Currently Amended) The device according to claim 44, wherein

said stretch-resistant ~~device~~ sole engaging surface is formed of a single layer of fabric material having a uniform thickness of less than ~~about~~ 30 mils (0.762 mm).

47. (Currently Amended) The device according to claim 44, wherein

said stretch-resistant ~~device~~ sole member has less than 15% elongation when subjected to a tensile load (lb/in-width) approximately equivalent to 25 pounds/inch in accordance with ASTM D3759.

48. (Currently Amended) The device according to claim 44, further comprising:

a thin flexible ~~stretch-resistant~~ arch strap having opposed ends extending laterally outward from opposite sides of said stretch-resistant ~~device~~ sole engaging surface in a position to at least partially encircle the talus, the navicular, the cuneiform, ~~and~~ or the cuboid region of the foot;

an adhesive layer on said arch strap for adhering said arch strap directly to the outer skin tissue on the sides ~~and~~ or top of ~~the arch of~~ the foot, and a protective cover removeably disposed over said adhesive layer which, when removed, exposes said adhesive layer;

said arch strap, when adhered to the outer skin tissue on the sides ~~and~~ or top ~~of the arch~~ of the foot, providing resistance to vertical and lateral movement of the talus, the navicular, the cuneiform, ~~and~~ or the cuboid of the foot and reducing vertical and lateral tension forces applied to the plantar fascia from forces on the arch of the foot ~~which push the bones of the foot downwardly~~.

49. (Currently Amended) The device according to claim 48, wherein

said ~~stretch-resistant~~ arch strap is secured to said device by an adhesive.

50. (Currently Amended) The device according to claim 48, wherein

said ~~stretch-resistant~~ arch strap is integrally formed with said device.

51. (Currently Amended) The device according to claim 44, further comprising:

at least one thin flexible ~~stretch-resistant~~ heel strap extending rearwardly from said sole engaging surface of said device;

an adhesive layer on said heel strap for adhering said heal strap directly to the outer skin tissue on the back of the heel of the foot, and a protective cover removeably disposed over said adhesive layer which, when removed, exposes said adhesive layer;

said ~~stretch-resistant~~ heel strap, when adhered to the outer skin tissue of the heel of the foot providing support to ~~the heel of the foot to reduce tension forces transferred between the heel and the plantar fascia~~ help maintain the installed position of said sole member.

52. (Currently Amended) The device according to claim 51, wherein

said ~~stretch-resistant~~ heel strap is integrally formed with said device.

53. (Currently Amended) The device according to claim 44, further comprising:

a thin flexible ~~stretch-resistant~~ front strap having opposed ends extending laterally outward from opposite sides of said stretch-resistant ~~device~~ sole engaging surface in a position to at least partially overlap the top of the foot above the ball portion of the foot;

an adhesive layer on said ~~arch~~ front strap for adhering said front strap directly to the outer skin tissue on sides and top of the ball portion of the foot, and a protective cover removeably disposed over said adhesive layer which, when removed, exposes said adhesive layer;

said ~~stretch-resistant~~ front strap, when adhered to the outer skin tissue on the sides or ~~and~~ top of the ball portion of the foot providing support to the area adjacent to the ball of the foot to reduce tension forces transferred between the ball of the foot and the plantar fascia.

54. (Currently Amended) The device according to claim 53, wherein

said ~~stretch-resistant~~ front strap is integrally formed with said device.

55. (Previously Presented) The device according to ~~claim 44~~ claim 47, wherein

said sole engaging member ~~surface~~ includes a medicinal agent selected from the group ~~consisting of~~ containing: anti-fungal agents, anti-microbial agents, anti-inflammatory agents, and deodorants, and tea tree oil.

56. (Currently Amended) An orthodic foot support device for ~~providing support to, and reducing stress on, the plantar fascia of~~ a human foot, comprising:

a ~~thin flexible~~ foot support device having a thin flexible substantially stretch-resistant sole member with a sole engaging surface sized and shaped to engage the outer skin surface of at least a portion of the sole of the foot in the region of the foot extending from the heel to the proximal end of the four small toes, and an adhesive layer on said sole engaging surface for adhering said sole engaging ~~portion~~ surface directly to the outer skin surface of the sole of the foot; and

at least one thin flexible ~~stretch-resistant~~ strap or tab having an end extending outward from said sole engaging surface beyond the sole of the foot, and an adhesive layer on said strap or tab for adhering said strap or tab directly to the outer skin surface ~~adjacent~~ on a side or the top of ~~to the sole~~ of the foot; ~~whereby~~

~~said device and said strap or said tab, when adhered to the outer skin surface surfaces of the sole and adjacent to the sole of the foot, provides support to said sole member plantar fascia region of the foot by restricting and~~ said sole engaging member sufficiently stretch-resistant to restrict extension and stretching of the outer skin ~~tissues of the foot~~ surfaces of the sole when adhered thereto and said adhesive layer on said sole engaging surface is of sufficient adhesive strength to maintain said device on the outer skin surface of the sole of the foot so that tension forces applied to the plantar fascia ~~from forces on the arch of the foot which push the bones of the foot downwardly~~ are shared with said outer skin surface, said adhesive layer, said sole engaging surface and said stretch resistant sole member engaging ~~portion and said strap~~ surface to restrict stretching and extension of the outer skin tissue on the sole of the foot and to restrict ~~extension~~ stretching of[[,]] ~~and reduce tension in,~~ the plantar fascia[[.]]; whereby

said strap or tab adhered to the outer skin surface ~~surfaces adjacent to the sole~~ of the foot provides additional resistance to lateral and longitudinal forces and assists in maintaining said device in the installed position.

57. (Currently Amended) The device according to claim 56, wherein

said at least one thin flexible ~~stretch-resistant~~ strap or tab comprises an arch strap having at least one end extending laterally outward from a side of said ~~stretch-resistant device~~ sole engaging surface in a position to engage the sides and at least a portion of the top of the arch of the foot so as to at least partially encircle the talus, the navicular, the cuneiform, ~~and~~ or the cuboid region of the foot;

said arch strap, when adhered to the outer skin surfaces on the sides and top of the arch of the foot, providing resistance to vertical and lateral movement of the talus, the navicular, the cuneiform, ~~and~~ or the cuboid of the foot and reducing vertical and lateral tension forces applied to the plantar fascia from forces on the arch of the foot which push the bones of the foot downwardly.

58. (Currently Amended) The device according to claim 56, wherein

said at least one thin flexible ~~stretch-resistant~~ strap or tab comprises at least one heel strap or heel tab extending ~~rearwardly~~ from said sole engaging surface of said device, and an adhesive layer on said heel strap or heel tab for adhering said heel strap or heel tab directly to the outer skin surface on the back or side of the heel of the foot;

said ~~stretch-resistant~~ heel strap or heel tab, when adhered to the outer skin surface of the heel of the foot providing support to the heel of the foot ~~to reduce tension forces transferred between the heel and the plantar fascia~~.

59. (Currently Amended) The device according to claim 56, wherein

said at least one thin flexible ~~stretch-resistant~~ strap or tab comprises a front strap having at least one end extending laterally outward from a side of said stretch-resistant ~~device~~ sole engaging surface in a position to at least partially overlap the top of the foot above the ball portion of the foot, and an adhesive layer on said ~~arch~~ front strap for adhering said front strap directly to the outer skin surfaces on the sides and top of the ball portion of the foot;

said ~~stretch-resistant~~ front strap, when adhered to the outer skin surfaces on the sides or ~~and~~ top of the ball portion of the foot providing support to the area adjacent to the ball of the foot to reduce tension forces transferred between the ball of the foot and the plantar fascia.

60. (Currently Amended) A ~~An orthotic plantar fascia~~ support device for ~~providing support to, and reducing stress on, the plantar fascia of~~ a human foot, comprising:

a thin flexible foot support ~~stretch-resistant sole engaging member~~ device of substantially uniform thickness having a stretch-resistant sole engaging surface sized and shaped to engage the outer skin surface on at least a portion the sole of the foot and extend along at least a portion the plantar fascia region of the foot ~~from about the ball of the foot to the heel of the foot,~~ an adhesive layer on said sole engaging surface for adhering said sole engaging surface directly to the outer skin tissue on the sole of the foot, and a protective cover removeably disposed over said adhesive layer which, when removed, exposes said adhesive layer; and

a thin flexible ~~stretch resistant~~ arch strap member having a mid portion and opposed ends, an adhesive layer on said arch strap, and a protective cover removeably disposed over said adhesive layer which, when removed, exposes said adhesive layer; whereby

said arch strap mid portion is adhered to an underside of said sole engaging ~~member~~ surface with said opposed ends extending laterally outward from opposite sides thereof and said opposed ends are adhered directly to the outer skin tissue on the sides ~~and~~ or top of the arch of the foot in a position to at least partially encircle the talus, the navicular, the cuneiform, ~~and~~ or the cuboid region of the foot;

said adhesive layer on said sole engaging surface is of sufficient adhesive strength to maintain said device in place on the outer skin surface on the sole of the foot and said stretch-resistant sole engaging ~~member~~ surface is sufficiently stretch-resistant to restrict extension and stretching of the outer skin ~~tissue~~ surface on the sole of the foot, when adhered thereto, ~~to provide support to the plantar fascia region of the foot by restricting extension and stretching of the outer skin tissue when adhered thereto~~ so that tension forces applied to the plantar fascia ~~from forces on the arch of the foot which push the bones of the foot downwardly~~ are shared with said outer skin surface, said adhesive layer and said sole engaging ~~member~~ surface to restrict extension and stretching of[[,]] ~~and reduce tension in,~~ the plantar fascia[[.]] ;and

said arch strap, when adhered to said outer skin ~~tissue~~ surface on the sides ~~and~~ or top of the arch of the foot, ~~providing~~ provides resistance to vertical and lateral movement of the talus, the navicular, the cuneiform, ~~and~~ or the cuboid of the foot and reducing vertical and lateral tension forces applied to the plantar fascia from forces on the arch of the foot ~~which push the bones of the foot downwardly~~.

61. (Currently Amended) The support according to claim 60, further comprising:

at least one thin flexible ~~stretch-resistant~~ heel strap extending ~~rearwardly~~ from said sole engaging surface ~~of said sole engaging member~~, and an adhesive layer on said heel strap; wherein

said heel strap is adhered to the outer skin tissue on the ~~back of the~~ heel of the foot to provide support to help maintain the install position of said device ~~the heel of the foot and reduce tension forces transferred between the heel and the plantar fascia~~.

62. (Currently Amended) A method for ~~reducing stress on~~ for treating plantar fasciitis or for preventing damaging tensile stress in the plantar fascia of a human foot, comprising the steps of:

providing a ~~thin flexible stretch-resistant~~ foot support device ~~of substantially uniform thickness~~ having a thin flexible stretch-resistant sole engaging surface sized and shaped to be conformed to ~~engage~~ the outer skin tissue on at least a portion of the sole of the foot in a region of the foot from the heel of the foot to the proximal end of the four small toes; and an adhesive layer on at least a portion of said sole engaging surface for adhering said device to the outer skin tissue on the sole of the foot, said adhesive layer of sufficient adhesive strength to maintain said device in place on the outer skin tissue on the sole of the foot and said stretch-resistant ~~device~~ sole engaging surface sufficiently stretch-resistant so as to restrict extension and stretching of the outer skin tissue when adhered thereto;

adhering said sole engaging surface to the outer skin tissue on a portion of the sole of the foot ~~to extend~~ in a region of the foot from the heel of the foot to ~~at least the midportion of the foot~~ to the proximal end of the four small toes ~~to provide support to the plantar fascia region of the foot~~ such that tension forces applied to the plantar fascia ~~from forces on the arch of the foot which push the bones of the foot downwardly~~ are shared with said ~~device~~ outer skin tissue, said adhesive layer and said sole engaging surface to restrict extension or stretching of[[,]] said outer skin tissue, whereby; preventing excessive tension in the plantar fascia.

63. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 62, comprising the further steps of:

adhering opposed ends of a thin flexible ~~stretch-resistant~~ arch strap extending laterally outward from opposite sides of said stretch-resistant ~~device~~ sole engaging surface to the outer skin tissue on the sides ~~and~~ or top ~~of the arch~~ of the foot in a position to at least partially encircle the talus, the navicular, the cuneiform, ~~and~~ or the cuboid region of the foot so as to provide resistance to vertical and lateral movement of the talus, the navicular, the cuneiform, ~~and~~ or the cuboid of the foot and reduce vertical and lateral tension forces applied to the plantar fascia from forces on the arch of the foot ~~which push the bones of the foot downwardly~~.

64. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 63, wherein

said steps of adhering said arch strap include a preliminary step of adhering a midportion of said arch strap to an underside of said device, and thereafter

adhering said opposed ends of said arch strap to the outer skin tissue on the sides ~~and~~ or top of the arch of the foot in a position to at least partially encircle the talus, the navicular, the cuneiform, ~~and~~ or the cuboid region of the foot.

65. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 62, comprising the further steps of:

adhering a thin flexible ~~stretch-resistant~~ heel strap extending ~~rearwardly~~ from said sole engaging surface of said device to the outer skin tissue on the back or side of the heel of the foot ~~so as to provide support to the heel of the foot to reduce tension forces transferred between the heel and the plantar fascia~~.

66. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 62, wherein

said sole engaging surface is sized and shaped to engage the outer skin tissue on a portion of the sole of the foot in a region of the foot from about the heel of the foot to about the ball portion of the foot, and comprising the further steps of:

adhering opposed ends of a thin flexible ~~stretch-resistant~~ front strap extending laterally outward from opposite sides of said stretch-resistant ~~device~~ sole engaging surface to the outer skin tissue on the sides ~~and~~ or top of the ball portion of the foot in a position to overlap at least a portion of the top of the foot above the ball portion of the foot so as to provide support to the area

adjacent to the ball of the foot to reduce tension forces transferred between the ball of the foot and the plantar fascia.

67. (New) The device according to claim 56, wherein

said stretch-resistant sole member has a thickness of less than 30 mils (0.762 mm) and has less than 15% elongation when subjected to a tensile load (lb/in-width) approximately equivalent to 25 pounds/inch in accordance with ASTM D3759.

68. (New) The device according to claim 60, wherein

said stretch-resistant sole member has a thickness of less than 30 mils (0.762 mm).

69. (New) The method according to claim 62, comprising the further steps of:

removing at least one protective cover removeably disposed over said adhesive layer which, when removed, exposes said adhesive layer; and wherein said sole engaging surface is of a substantially uniform thickness of less than 30 mils (.762 mm) and has less than 15% elongation when subjected to a tensile load (lb/in-width) approximately equivalent to 25 pounds/inch in accordance with ASTM D3759.